

# THE MCGILL DAILY

VOLUME 84 • NUMBER 8

Yours in a united student movement since 1911

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1994

## Native MBA program on horizon in Saskatchewan

BY ALEX MATHIAS

Training programs specifically for First Nations peoples in business fields seem to be gaining some attention and acceptance in Canada. Although there are various Native education programs scattered across the country, none are quite like the Native MBA program being planned in Saskatchewan.

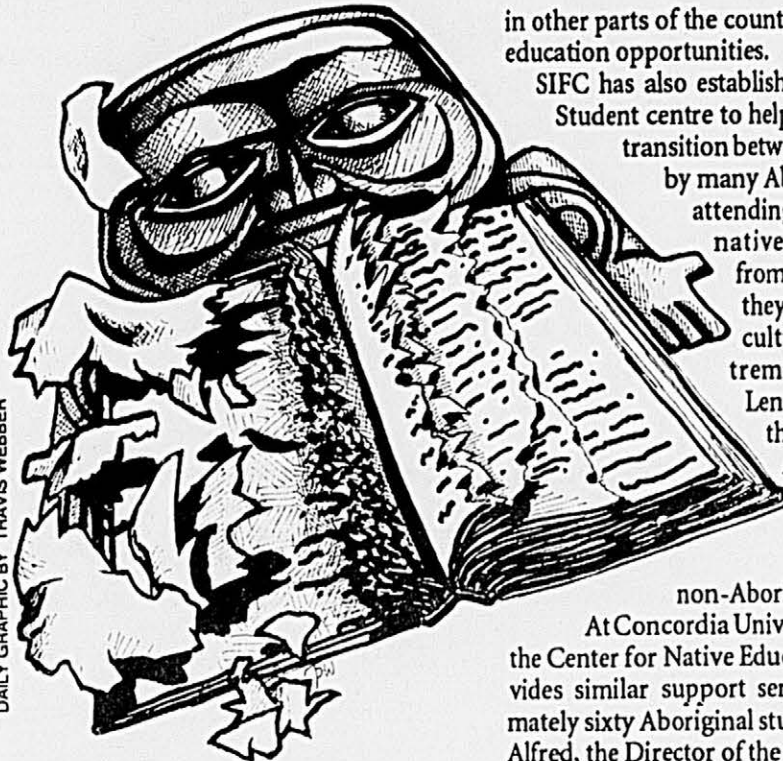
The University of Saskatchewan (U of S) College of Commerce and Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SCIF) are joining forces to establish this program by September 1996.

SCIF is a fully Native-controlled university college which offers undergraduate degrees in business and commerce. The MBA program being proposed is "very timely", according to Paul Dudgeon, Professor of Head of the School of Business and Administration at SCIF.

According to Dudgeon, governments, companies, and Crown Corporations all want to hire Aboriginal people, but there are not nearly enough trained to meet the demands. He believes that this program will have major national implications for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

So, the purpose of this Native MBA program is to increase aboriginal access into management systems. This program is unique because it offers comparative management with regards to decision making, and policy formulation focusing on the ethics, values and traditions of the Indian, Inuit, and Metis communities.

Jack Viq, associate dean of U of S's College of Commerce, says the proposed program also meets a political demand.



Although some gains have been made, many Canadian universities, including McGill, have no official programs to meet the needs of Native students.

"Aboriginal people have a real concern about self-government... We need to start saving this community," said Viq.

Saskatchewan is at the forefront of Native studies. Kelly Lendesay, a Research Officer at the SCIF credits this to Saskatchewan's large number of Aboriginal peoples, totalling 12 per cent of the population. Lendesay also remarks that the Aboriginal leaders in this province seem to be more "progressive" than

in other parts of the country with regards to education opportunities.

SIFC has also established an Aboriginal Student centre to help ease the difficult transition between lifestyles faced by many Aboriginal students attending university. Many native students come from reserves and when they reach the city, the culture shock is extreme. According to Lendesay this causes the drop-out rate of Aboriginal students to be seven times higher than that of non-Aboriginal students.

At Concordia University in Montréal, the Center for Native Education (CNE) provides similar support services to approximately sixty Aboriginal students. Dr. Gerald Alfred, the Director of the centre, and a Mohawk from Kahnawake says, "A single student failing to complete school is a major loss for the Native community, where relatively speaking if a non-Aboriginal student doesn't finish, it doesn't have the same impact."

Although these programs do look hopeful there are still many universities in Canada which do not have Native Studies programs and do not work to accommodate the needs of Native students, McGill among them.

Lendesay however, remains hopeful. He says, "This is the evolution of an education system. We are going to be encouraging others schools and developing linkages. You need to start somewhere. This is a place to start."

## Stumbling toward a racial harassment policy

BY ROBIN PERELLE

It's hard to believe that McGill, pinnacle of Maclean's annual pole, is one of the only universities in Canada without a racial harassment policy, but it's true.

Five months after McGill's Subcommittee on Racial Discrimination held a hearing to prove that though incidents of racial harassment pervade our campus and our classrooms, the university is still nowhere near implementing a policy to deal with the problem.

In fact, the subcommittee originally charged with the investigation has now been disbanded, and a potential replacement has yet to meet.

"I feel cheated and disappointed," said Rumbi Katedza, a member of the Shakti Women of Colour Collective. "Everybody seems too afraid to deal with race. Sure, we can have committees on women's issues but it just doesn't seem as important for this University to deal with race issues," she said.

VP University Affairs Jennifer Small explained that the Joint Senate/Board Commit-

tee on Equity replaced the old subcommittee with a new, more permanent Subcommittee on Visible Minorities and Aboriginal Peoples.

She admitted, however, that the latter's mandate has not yet been defined, effectively stranding the issue of racial harassment somewhere in mid-air.

"I would assume that the Subcommittee on Visible Minorities and Aboriginal Peoples will pick up the issue of racial harassment, it would make sense," said Small tentatively.

Not only has committee work apparently ground to a halt, but the tapes containing the testimony taken at the hearing have not even been transcribed.

"We didn't get the tapes back as soon as we wanted to," said Small. Apparently they are in New York, with one of the old committee members.

There was one potentially constructive thing accomplished over the summer, though. Monique Shebbeare, who was employed by the Office of Employment Equity as a researcher over the summer, did a comparative study on racial harassment policies in other

universities across Canada.

"I called a bunch of universities and compiled a list of the initiatives that (they) are taking," said Shebbeare. Unfortunately, details of the report, such as the numerous institutions across the country that have already implemented policies and are way ahead of McGill, must remain confidential until the appropriate committee gets first crack at them.

Katedza is disgusted with how long the process has been taking. "By not consistently pursuing the process of establishing a racial harassment policy, the university seems to be ignoring the needs of a sizeable portion of the student population," she said.

But Small doesn't think the University should rush things. "This is the kind of process that takes time," she explained. "You want to balance speed with caution, do the work as expeditiously as possible but also as carefully as possible," she said.

Small also suggested that administrators would like to get the sexual harassment policy, which is presently the subject of much

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## Blood Drive back on campus

BY CHERIE PAYNE

The Canadian Red Cross has met with much criticism in recent years over the question of whether or not its questionnaire can fairly screen out those donors with a high risk of HIV infection.

Critics of the screening process have been particularly vocal about the fact that the questionnaire asks potential male donors about their sexual orientation, but does not ask them about their sexual activities. It is argued that this tactic needlessly discriminates against gay men, while allowing women and heterosexual men who do not practice safe sex to slip through the cracks.

This week, McGill hosted another blood drive, and at least one student expressed shock at the laxness of the Canadian Red Cross's screening process. U1 Arts student Dan Horowitz is a new student from Oregon. He says that when he went to give blood on Wednesday he was surprised to discover that the Canadian Red Cross did not have as thorough a screening process as that in his home state.

Horowitz said that in Oregon a potential donor is asked personally about her or his experiences with sex and drugs. Horowitz said he was surprised to find that the Canadian questionnaire merely asks "if male, [have you had] sex with another male, even once", assuming that "the following activities put you at risk for AIDS."

continued on page 2



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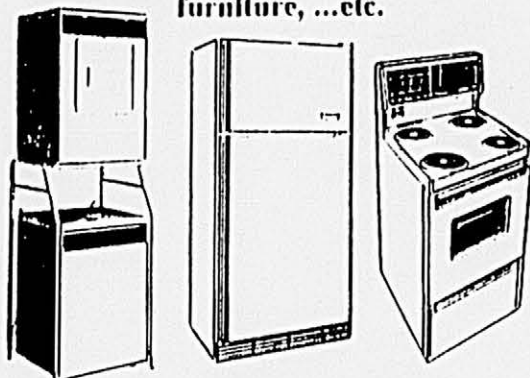
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Thank you — Chairperson of the Board.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1994

## Red Cross

continued from page 1

"She [the nurse] didn't ask me about anything which I didn't check off on the questionnaire. In Oregon, they ask you about specific sexual acts," he commented.

The Student Society voted to ban the Blood Drive from all Student Society activities last November. The motion, however, was rescinded in February, and brought to a campus wide referendum. About 80 percent of undergraduates voted to keep the Blood Drive at McGill.

Similarly, in British Columbia's University of Victoria, the Canadian Red Cross voluntarily left the campus under pressure from student groups who felt that the organization is wrong in targeting orientation rather than activity.

Ken Faris, a University of Victoria spokesperson, said that he felt the Canadian Red Cross's questionnaire violated the school's harassment code.

"It's clear that it's a case of discrimination, but as to whether that discrimination was fair or not, the university is not the appropriate place to decide that. The [Council of Human Rights] is, because they have the resources to deal with it," Faris said.

This summer, the Krever Blood Inquiry was set up to investigate the amount of HIV-tainted blood which has been distributed by the Canadian Red Cross. Even for those who do not see the question about gay men as being discriminatory, one question remains. If the Canadian Red Cross does not ask all potential donors about their specific sexual experiences, how can it be sure that it is weeding out high-risk donors?

—with CUP files

## events

• Interested in environmental awareness and action in and around campus? Too little recycling and too much environmental apathy? Well then come to the first SSMU Environmental Committee meeting tonight at 5pm in Shatner, Rm 310. Old and new members welcome. 333-2877.

• Centre for Developing Area Studies is holding a seminar on *Threat To a Secular India* by Dr. Ashok Mitra, Member of parliament and ex-minister of Finance in West Bengal on Thurs. Sept. 29th at 3:30pm. There will also be a seminar on *Bangladeshi Women, their Legal Rights and Human Rights Situation* by M.A. Zaman, Director USC Bangladesh on Sat. Oct. 1st at 11am. Both will be held at the Centre for Developing Area Studies, 3715 Peel, Rm 100. For more info call 398-3507.

• NDP McGill will have its general meeting on Wed. Sept. 28th at 5 pm in Shatner, Rm 302.

• The 1994 McGill Book Fair will be held Oct. 19th and 20th from 9am to 9pm at the Roddick Gates or McTavish. The funds will go to a scholarship fund. Prices start at \$0.25. 398-5000.

• Literacy Tutor Training. Anglophone women aged 16+ who would like to learn to read and write can find help at the Women's "Y" Literacy Center. Training sessions will be given on Mon. and Wed. beginning Sept. 26th. 866-9941 ext. 278.

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# Man acquitted of abusing 13-year old wife

## Judge questions credibility of immigrant girl

BY STEPHANIE EVANS

A Montréal judge recently acquitted a 50-year-old man on assault charges towards his 13-year-old wife from the Dominican Republic. The girl had been sponsored for immigration by the man, a Canadian citizen, who raped and sodomized her shortly after her arrival in Canada. She stayed at the Secours aux Femmes shelter for immigrant women trapped in abusive relationships.

Judge Joel Guberman and the defence lawyers agreed that the girl's motives for marrying the man were questionable. They believed she used the man to immigrate to Canada, which consequently reduced her "credibility".

Critics have said that this judgment sets a dangerous precedent and sends out potentially harmful messages to both women and men.

Omaira Falcon, a spokesperson for the Secours aux Femmes shelter, said the decision will encourage other men to find brides in developing nations to abuse them.

Falcon fears the decision "will discourage women from reporting violent crimes perpetrated against them because in the end, justice is not served."

Furthermore, "the women have to assure the courts that they did not provoke their attackers," said Marcia Aiquel, a worker at Secours aux Femmes.

According to the law, any adult who engages in sexual activity with anyone under the



age of 18 is guilty of a sexual offence. The sentence for a crime of this nature could be as much as 10 years in prison. This law applies to sexual activity with anyone 13 or younger, whether violent or not. Usually, anyone found guilty of sexual assault causing bodily harm faces a sentence of up to 14 years in prison.

In this case the victim was raped and sodomized. Judge Joel Guberman said he felt that the girl's questionable motives for marrying the man who later abused her were enough to acquit him of all charges.

Falcon said she believes the law has not adapted to social change. She specifically criticized the current immigration laws for putting immigrant women in an extremely vulnerable and potentially dangerous situation. The law requires the husband, who sponsors his wife for immigration, to be financially responsible for his wife for five years following her arrival in Canada. Aiquel said that this puts the man in a very powerful position and makes the woman very vulnerable.

Falcon also expressed concerns about the insufficient information communicated to immigrant women upon their arrival in Canada. They are currently given a pamphlet containing information on their rights and freedoms. However, many of the women at the shelter have told her that their husbands destroyed the pamphlets before they had the chance to read them. She believes the women should be spoken to directly, so as to ensure that they are properly informed.

DAILY GRAPHIC BY KRISTIN ANDREWS

# TV station trying to get funds from SSMU

## ILLTV: McGill's newest campus media?

BY TARA VANZUIDAN AND CHERIE PAYNE

Discussions have recently begun over whether or not to fund a television station on campus. Known as ILLTV, the station could bring McGill up to date on technology.

The basic aim of ILLTV, according to executive producer Haim Gorodzinsky, is "to entertain, inform, and educate McGill students through the novel use of interactive media."

Through original programming geared towards university students, ILLTV hopes to provide an outlet for the creative energy that abounds on campus. As a working TV station, ILLTV will also give McGill students interested in the field of telecommunications an opportunity to get hands-on experience in editing and producing for TV.

At the moment, ILLTV is in its preliminary stages. The services that it would like to offer all depend on the level to which they can take their ideas and make them a reality. ILLTV is presently looking for support from the McGill community in order to increase awareness and interest in the station.

But the nascent station is having a hard time getting the recognition and support it wants from the Students' Society. "ILLTV wants to be recognized and supported on the same level as other organizations," said Gorodzinsky.



DAILY GRAPHIC BY MAX FRANCISCO

The TV station is now seeking the support of other campus groups, in order to prove to Council that it has the backing of many students.

Organizers initially expected to receive support from the other campus media. However, *Tribune* Editor in Chief Michael Broadhurst said the *Tribune* will not be giving ILLTV formal support.

In an open letter to Gorodzinsky, the Students' Society Publications Department, of which the *Tribune* is a member, expressed concern that the TV station could adversely affect the advertising revenue of the paper.

The problem is the station needs \$91 000 to get going.

the groups on campus. Johnson expressed concern that supporting a huge project like this one could cut into the amount of funding future SSMU councils could provide for clubs like the Sexual Assault Centre.

Other skeptics of the proposed TV station agreed. In an open letter to ILLTV's executive producer Haim Gorodzinsky, councillors presented a series of alternatives that the station could pursue in order to get funding from somewhere other than SSMU. Options included renting, rather than buying equipment, and entering into a lease-to-own arrangement.

Despite its problems, Johnson and oth-

**Students Society VP Finance Paul Johnson says the \$91 000 ILLTV is asking for would cut into other clubs' budgets.**

At the first Council meeting of the year, VP Finance Paul Johnson said he didn't think the Student's Society could afford to support ILLTV. "I will not, in good faith...recommend its implementation for September," he stated.

That's because \$91 000 accounts for almost half the budget allocated this year to all

er councillors have expressed enthusiasm for the idea of a TV station on campus. "ILLTV is a fantastic idea, and if implemented, McGill would be the leading university television station in the country, maybe even in North America," said Johnson.



## COMMENT

Good intentions  
or bad solutions?

*"Canada's foreign policy would be meaningless if it were not caring, for it would not reflect the character of Canadians."*  
— Pierre Trudeau.

The new Liberal vision of foreign policy will be released on October 28th. It is supposedly based on a series of "round table" discussions that Canadians from across the country were able to participate in. Most Canadians probably don't remember being invited.

In a talk on his role in the Parliamentary Committee's upcoming Canadian Foreign Policy Review, Liberal MP for Kitchener John English said that fiscal constraints are affecting foreign policy around the globe, and Canada is just part of a larger trend.

It has been a common, if not accepted, practice for aid agencies like the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to tie their "donations" to business interests at home. Often this results in useless and under-researched aid development projects (like giving African nations snowmobiles made by Canadian companies) which make corporations at home richer.

Recently, interest seems to be shifting to a new corner of the globe. CIDA has stopped sending money to Africa and is increasingly concentrating on funding Asian and Eastern European countries. As if by coincidence, the World Bank began pouring billions of dollars into Vietnam, for example, which just happens to be in close proximity to the Asian business community and is a cheap source of labour.

So the new 'regional focus' seems to include re-directing CIDA funds away from the world's poorest countries towards the countries which lie within the Canadian business community's sphere of interest.

English claims that Canadians no longer want their government to commit so much money to peacekeeping in areas where battles still rage.

If this is true, it leaves us to wonder just how well educated Canadians are about where the money for other countries is going. Right now, the category "development aid" represents one percent of Canada's capital gains. But under government categorization, "peacekeeping" and its expenses count as development aid, making government spending on other countries look higher than it actually is.

If Canadians think that hoarding the one percent of capital gains which goes towards peacekeeping missions and aid will help solve their deficit problem, they are seriously misinformed.

This is the perfect time for Canadians to review the motives behind aid. If we are only giving aid to countries in need because Canadian business will gain, then is "aid" true assistance or merely exploitation?

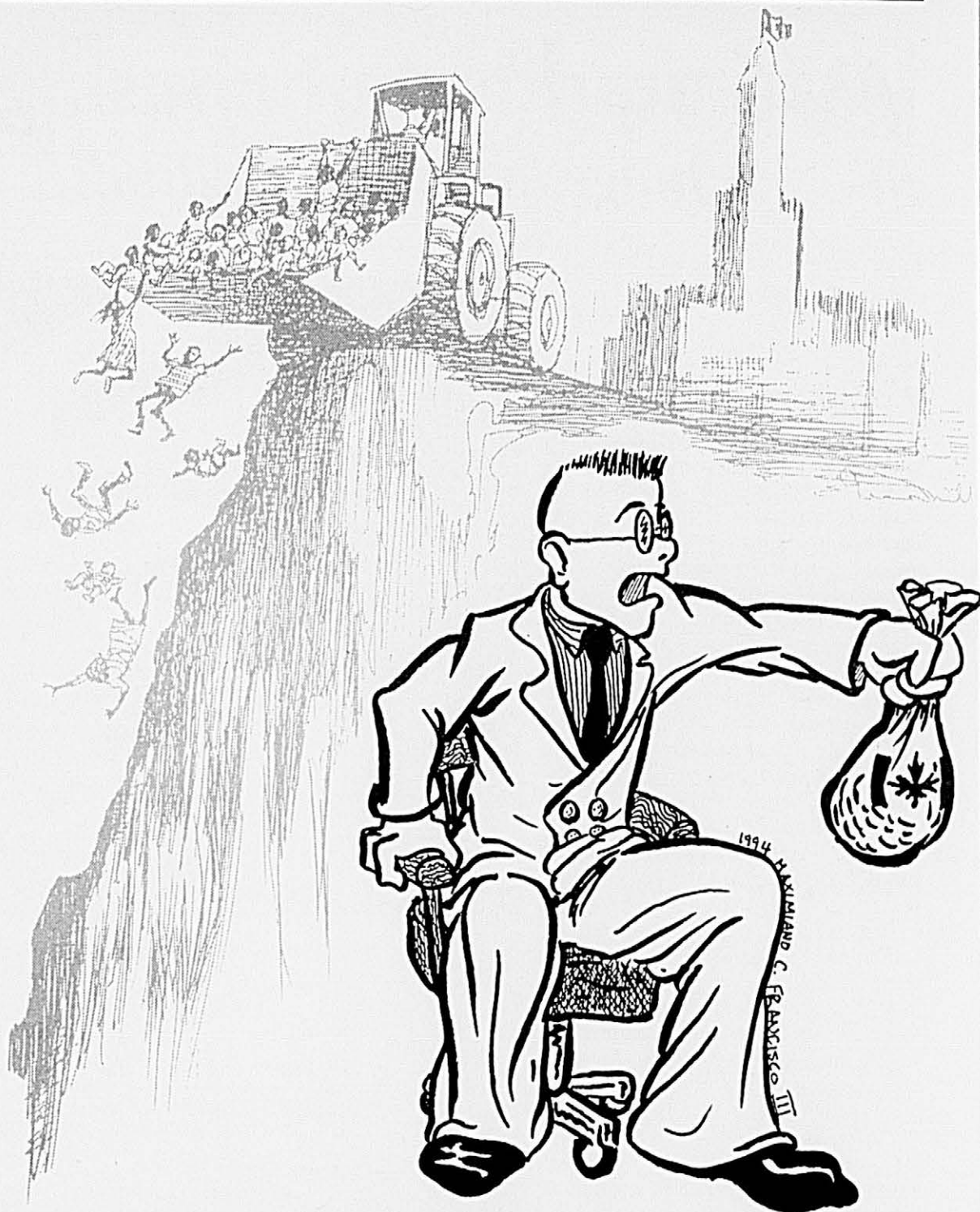
Melanie Newton, Robin Perelle

## LETTERS

**The Daily welcomes all letters under 300 words.**

**Add your name, program, year and phone number. Anonymity can be provided; talk to an editor beforehand. We print all letters provided they are not racist, sexist, homophobic or slanderous. Opinions can be expressed in the form of a Hyde Park, no more than 500 words.**

**ERRATUM:** On page 8 of the Wednesday, September 21 issue, we incorrectly listed the second floor of the Bronfman building as the location of the office where students can get an e-mail account. This office is actually located on the second floor of Burnside Hall. We regret any inconvenience this may have caused.



## HYDE PARK

## Of death, taxes and tuition fee hikes

Guy Caron, National Chairperson Canadian Federation of Students.

Let me begin by wishing you a very successful academic year. The university or college experience should be the best place to open your mind to what the world was, is, and should be. Unfortunately, the future of post-secondary education may not be so bright.

I remember my first year as a student. I didn't get involved in any activities. I never ran for any student councils and I didn't know much, nor did I care about issues affecting post-secondary education. I only wanted to complete my degree...

After four years of studies, I had the good fortune of meeting people who knew the issues that could prevent you, or your friends, from completing your degree or diploma. I ran for a position on my local Student Union Executive, and won. This allowed me to learn more about

the way post-secondary education is perceived by the government. I can tell you, it is not a rose picture...

Today's students have to face many challenges: studying with a higher debt load, full-time students with part-time jobs, and tuition fee increases. We have grown accustomed to a new saying: "There are three things which are impossible to escape in this world: death, taxes and tuition fee hikes." Notwithstanding death and taxes, this does not have to be true.

As you may already know, the Federal government is reviewing our social policy programs. Reforms to post-secondary education in this review are clear.

The federal government is looking at "options for reforming federal support for post-secondary education, including a new ap-

proach to student assistance. This approach would build on the foundation of personal investment in learning. It could involve the introduction of income-contingent repayment loans" (Social Security Reform, Draft for discussion, Learning section).

In short, the federal government outlined its wish to eliminate contributions to education, and to pass the bill on to you!! You don't have to accept this. Contact your student union to know how you can get involved. We need the support of all members of the Canadian Federation of Students, including you!

The Canadian Federation of Students is working to stop these reforms to post-secondary education. Our action, however, will only be as successful as the number of people supporting us.

**SINCE 1911**  
**Vol. 84 No. 8**

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**THE MCGILL DAILY**



# Unemployment:

## Student summer jobless rate increases

BY ANTHONY PANGALOS

OTTAWA (CUP) — Students recovered this summer along with the rest of the economy, says a monthly Statistics Canada employment survey released on September 9.

For the first time in five years, the summer unemployment rate among returning students aged 15 to 24 dropped — to an average of 16 per cent in 1994 from 18 per cent in 1993. The 1993 rate had been the highest summer unemployment rate in 10 years, while the average rate of increase has hovered at 9.5 per cent since 1989.

But this summer's slight decrease in the unemployment rate still has some people skeptical that students are really participating in the economic recovery.

Jocelyn Charron, a Canadian Federation of Students researcher, says the survey's result is skewed because fewer students were in the labour force this summer. Instead, she says they were attending summer school.

"Most of the survey is anecdotal. There were probably a few more jobs for students, but not that many," said Charron.

Statistics Canada surveyed about 58,000 households every month this summer. People aged 15 to 24 who attended school during the summer were not counted as being part of the labour force.

Overall, about 212,000 students in Canada between the ages of 15 and 24 spent the summer without a job. Almost half of them were in Ontario and another 50,000 students were unemployed in Quebec.

As usual, students looking for work in Newfoundland were the worst off in the country — 31.5 per cent of them could not find jobs this summer. Saskatchewan students were the best off, as only 11.4 per cent of them were left jobless for the summer months.

Marc Levesque, an official at Statistics Canada, says the survey is representative of current times.

"During a recession, the rates usually go way up and they go down during the boom years," he explained.

Levesque said the survey shows that the economy is getting better, but that it's still too early to tell if the trend will continue.



## South African musicians fight discrimination

Some of South Africa's best musicians have embarked on a campaign against racism on the part of record companies, retailers, radio and television. The artists, which include noted figures like Miriam Makeba and the "peoples" poet Mzwakhe Mbuli, are demanding that outstanding royalties be paid, exploitative royalty rates be increased, and an end be made to the division of radio stations along "black" and "white" lines.

We will leave "no stone unturned", said Mbuli, in challenging all institutions that practice discrimination, especially the South African Broadcasting Company (SABC) and the record companies, the main culprits.

Over the past two months the musicians have picketed, marched, and organized sit-ins. They have also had to fight off brutish, baton-waving SABC's security guards and their dogs.

But the musicians show no signs of being perturbed. The "industries neither respect nor fear local artists," stated composer-singer Caiphus Semenya. "Artists have to do for themselves what workers have done for themselves."

PNEW, September 24, 1994

## DAILY DAYS DAILY DAYS DAILY DAYS DAILY DAYS

Several of our ever popular Daily Days have been shuffled to other days

Covering the environment and conducting effective meetings for democratic organizations (like the Daily) with MacDonald Campus'

Dr. Stuart Hill will now be held on Monday, October 3, 7:30pm.

A user's guide to the resources of the student press

with former Daily editor Dave Ley and

Canadian University Press regional co-ordinator Debbie Hum

will now be held on Friday, October 7 at 1pm in Union B-03

(the Daily's lovely bunker).

The news writing seminar with Daily editors Cherie Payne, Dave Austin

and Aubrey Cohen and staffer Pat Harewood

will take place on Wednesday, Sept. 28 as planned.



## US terms for end of Cuban blockade illegal

An article published this week in the Cuban weekly "Trabajadores" asserts that Cuba does not have to follow political models that claim to be democratic.

The article points out that in the Organization of American States Charter, article 3, clause C says:

"every state has the right to elect, without foreign interference, its political, economic and social system, to organize itself in the way it finds most convenient, and has the duty to not intervene in the internal matters of other states".

Cuba's weekly "Trabajadores" says Washington's blockade against Cuba is a unilateral act which the United Nations considers illegal.

Therefore, any demand made by the US to remove the blockade on the condition that Cuba "democratize" is illegitimate.

Trabajadores, September 19, 1994

## US blockade means big losses for Cuba

Speaking at the Mexico-Cuba mixed commission meeting this week, Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina said US pressures on governments and foreign business interests this year caused close to 1 billion dollars in losses for the Cuban economy. Last June, the Cuban foreign ministry presented a report to the United Nations detailing Washington's attempts to block business deals between Cuba and business interests in other countries. According to the report, the United States tried to stop the sale of Colombian oil to Cuba and foreign ventures on the island related to oil prospection. Washington also tried to block exports of Latin American and European raw materials to Cuba for the production of cosmetics and perfumes, trade with Honduran enterprises, and the extraction of Cuban nickel by Canadian businesses.

Mexican Foreign Minister Manuel Tello Macias said his government would again cast a vote of condemnation of the US blockade in the upcoming United Nations General Assembly session.

Trabajadores, September 19



# From colonialism to "democracy": tracing the roots of violence in Guatemala

by Martin Horak

IN 1992, RIGOBERTA MENCHU, a Guatemalan Mayan leader, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for a decade of human rights activism in the face of terror. For decades, this country of nine million, the most under-reported conflict in recent Latin American history has taken more than 250,000 lives, and displaced over a million rural inhabitants over the past three decades.

These victims have overwhelmingly been civilians, particularly Mayan indigenous peasants who constitute about two-thirds of the Guatemalan population. Their killers have been the country's own army and government. Menchu's own father was burned alive along with 27 other indigenous leaders after the army fire-bombed the embassy where they were staging a protest against human rights violations. Her mother and brother were then tortured and killed. In the village where she was born, she is the only known survivor.

Over the past two years, this terror against civilians has eased, as the government and the rebel forces of the Union Revolucionaria Nacional de Guatemala (URNG) have come closer to agreement on a permanent cease-fire. However, most observers remain cautious in their optimism regarding the current developments. For the roots of the Guatemalan conflict lie deep in the country's history of extreme social inequality which has developed over several centuries.

## A history of inequality

THE ORIGINS OF THIS LEGACY can be traced back to the Spanish conquest of the seventeenth century which wiped out more than half of the indigenous population of Guatemala via warfare and introduced diseases. The survivors found them-

selves at the bottom of a new three-tier social hierarchy: white (criollo) landowning elite, mixed-race (ladino) administrative/bureaucratic class, and finally, the Mayan peasantry.

This hierarchy remains essentially unchanged in our time: As of 1990, some 300 criollo families owned 70 per cent of arable land, the army was made up largely of ladino officers, and virtually all Mayans were peasants living below the poverty line. The sustained concentration of political and economic power in the hands of a small elite has led to a consistent impoverishment of the Mayan people, such that in a country where the Spanish conquerors reported plentiful food, eight out of ten children are now undernourished.

This social hierarchy had, and still has an important international dimension to it: The wealth of the criollo class was maintained by ex-

porting plantation-grown cash crops such as coffee and bananas to Europe and the United States. From the early twentieth century, the classic "banana republic" model prevailed. American companies such as United Fruit invested in Guatemala, and the USA became an important player on the Guatemalan political scene.

For both local criollos and foreign interests, it was advantageous to have a seasonal labor force to work the plantations. In the 1930's the dictator Jorge Ubico decreed that all peasants with less than two hectares of land were to perform a minimum of 100 days of forced labour on the plantations. A gargantuan presidential palace went up in Guatemala City while peasants starved. Mayan land was seized wholesale and the army grew in size and importance as an instrument of repression. The formally "democratic" political sys-

tem hardly disguised oligarchical rule by the few who were allowed to participate.

## Two steps forward, three steps back

IN 1944, A COUP BY MORE progressive elements of the army, representing the rising criollo middle class, ushered in a decade of social reform and relative progress. For the first time, social and health care programs were also aimed at the peasantry. The strong Mayan communal spirit was allowed to flourish in the form of community organisations of all types; and large plantations (including those of United Fruit) were seized and the land was returned to some 500,000 peasant families. This last action, however, brought the combined wrath of the criollo class and American interests down on the reformers, and a CIA-trained



"Rigoberta Menchu has been taught that true Christians forgive their persecutors and pray for the souls of their executioners. When they strike you on one cheek, she was taught, the true Christian offers the other. 'I no longer have a cheek to offer', says Rigoberta."



# Rebuilding a wounded country Guatemalan refugees return home after years of war



PHOTO COURTESY OF FRANÇOIS MELOCHE

IT WOULD BE ERRONEOUS TO infer from the silence/disinterest of the Canadian media that Guatemala is passing through an insignificant phase of its history.

This Central American country is potentially emerging from 33 years of internal conflict, perhaps even abandoning forever the title of "Worst Human Rights Violator," awarded to it by Amnesty International in 1993. As a result of the ongoing talks between the government and guerilla forces (Unión Revolucionaria Na-

While François confirmed that there is a large influx of returning refugees, he stated that many of these people are still unable to re-establish themselves on their lands. In fact, the 2000 person settlement of Veracruz in which he spent a few weeks was one of many 'temporary camps.'

The region — Ixcán — had once contained numerous farming cooperatives, and were deserted in the early 1980s when the peasants fled the large-scale military oppression. Consequently, the army began to occupy

they are apparently living openly without being harmed by the military, the CPRs of the Ishkan region - Welstad knows of seven - have also found that their land is being occupied.

Furthermore, although Ian knows of no attack on a CPR since January 1993, the safety of these communities is still not completely assured. Thus, as is the case with the refugees, a strong international presence is considered helpful. Ian and other foreigners have therefore accompanied delegations which communities send to the capi-

## An uncertain future

SO WHAT, AT THIS POINT IN time, can be said of Guatemala's future? François, while not at all negative, could not assure me that the country has emerged from its violent past. After all, political activists continue to be the targets of human rights violations, and the guerilla and military forces remain at war with each other.

Furthermore, even if the government and URNG do reach a framework agreement by the December deadline, and a ceasefire does ensue,

army was dispatched to do away with the reformers in 1954.

The hard-line military factions were back in, and the repression returned: Mayan lands were once more expropriated, unions and community organizations persecuted. In 1961, the first of three largely Mayan guerrilla organizations, which would later merge to become the URNG, took up arms against the regime.

In response to the uprising, army repression of the Mayan civilian population intensified, reaching an orgy of massacre and torture under General Rios Montt in the early 1980's. A quarter of the peasantry became refugees, fleeing northwest to Mexico, down into the slums of Guatemala City, or into the forest to live a phantom life in hiding. The United States, inaccurately representing the Mayan guerrillas as a "communist threat to the region", supplied arms to the Guatemalan government throughout the period (with the exception of the 1977-1980 Carter presidency).

1985 saw a formal transition to civilian government but in any real sense this "democracy" was dubious at best. The war continued, and 1987 saw over 1000 political assassinations of civilians. Desperately needed social and land reform was not endorsed by any of the political parties running and the genocidal Rios Montt resurfaced as presidential candidate in the 1990 elections (with Harris Whitbeck, a former US Marine, as running mate).

The recent URNG-government dialogue may yet point the way to a solution for Guatemala. The international community, including the USA, has recently become involved in directions perhaps more constructive than arms sales, and the Guatemalan government speaks grandly of compromise. The Mayan communal spirit, which has helped them to survive terror, may yet be given a chance to fulfil its true potential. But five hundred years of oppression is a painful legacy to overcome, and for the ruling elite, a difficult tradition to break with.

When asked about the international observers in Guatemala, both Ian and François (at right) agreed that it seems to be the current "fashion" to come to this particular country.

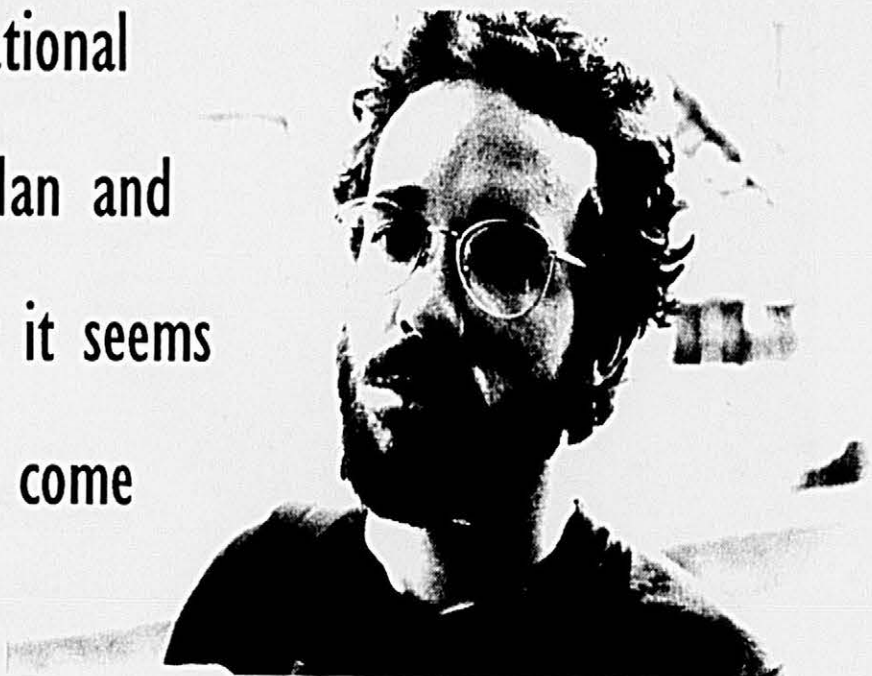


PHOTO BY DEREK FUNG

cional de Guatemala, or URNG), the United Nations recently announced that it plans to establish a 300 member human rights commission in the country.

While the political forces try to settle their differences and come to a ceasefire — a process which they are supposed to conclude this December — the people of Guatemala are also attempting to bring stability back into their lives. Whether they are among the hundreds of thousands who had fled to Mexico as refugees, or among the smaller groups which remained hidden in the Guatemalan rainforests, the people are returning with the hope of finally re-establishing themselves in their own country.

The refugees, who fled to Mexico during the military's "scorched earth policy" of the 1980s, number roughly 200 000. In October of 1992, the Guatemalan government signed a pact ensuring that refugees would be left unharmed if they returned, and since then, large groups have been coming back to their country.

Many international organizations have been involved in providing assistance in these 'collective returns'; "Project Accompaniment" is a Canadian group involved in this process, and François Meloché, a McGill student, was a member of its delegation this summer.

these lands, or it repopulated them with "model towns," over which security forces imposed strict control.

Thus, many of the refugees who return to Guatemala are as of yet unable to resume farming their land. In fact, François acknowledged that those in settlements such as Veracruz do not live much differently from the refugees still waiting in the camps of Mexico.

## A long homecoming

SMALLER IN NUMBER THAN THE refugees, the Comunidades de Poblaciones en Resistencia (CPR's), are communities which also abandoned their homes in the 1980s. However, instead of escaping to Mexico, these people went into hiding in the forests of their own country. Constantly avoiding detection, some CPRs have been leading this secretive existence for over a decade.

Ian Welsted, like François Meloché, spent several weeks in Guatemala, and he explained to me the difference between the refugees and CPR's. The latter did not leave their country, "for reasons of ideology and dignity, and because they were afraid of having their land sold."

However, like the refugees, they too are now emerging with the hope of reclaiming their country. And while

tal, and have also been present during meetings between community leaders and the army.

When asked about the international observers in Guatemala, both Ian and François agreed that it seems to be the current "fashion" to come to this particular country. François was even aware of a Danish project whereby the unemployed could come to work in Guatemala while still receiving their social security cheques.

But while both men feel that the presence of foreigners has been helpful to Guatemalan refugees and CPRs, they were concerned with the fact that some come for almost "touristic" purposes, spending only one or two days with the Guatemalan communities, and acquiring little insight into the current situation.

Furthermore, Welsted and Meloché know that they need not be in Guatemala to show support for its people. Both see a need for raising awareness and lobbying the Canadian government to push for the respect of human rights in Guatemala.

Guatemala's problems of poverty and social inequalities will still have remained untouched.

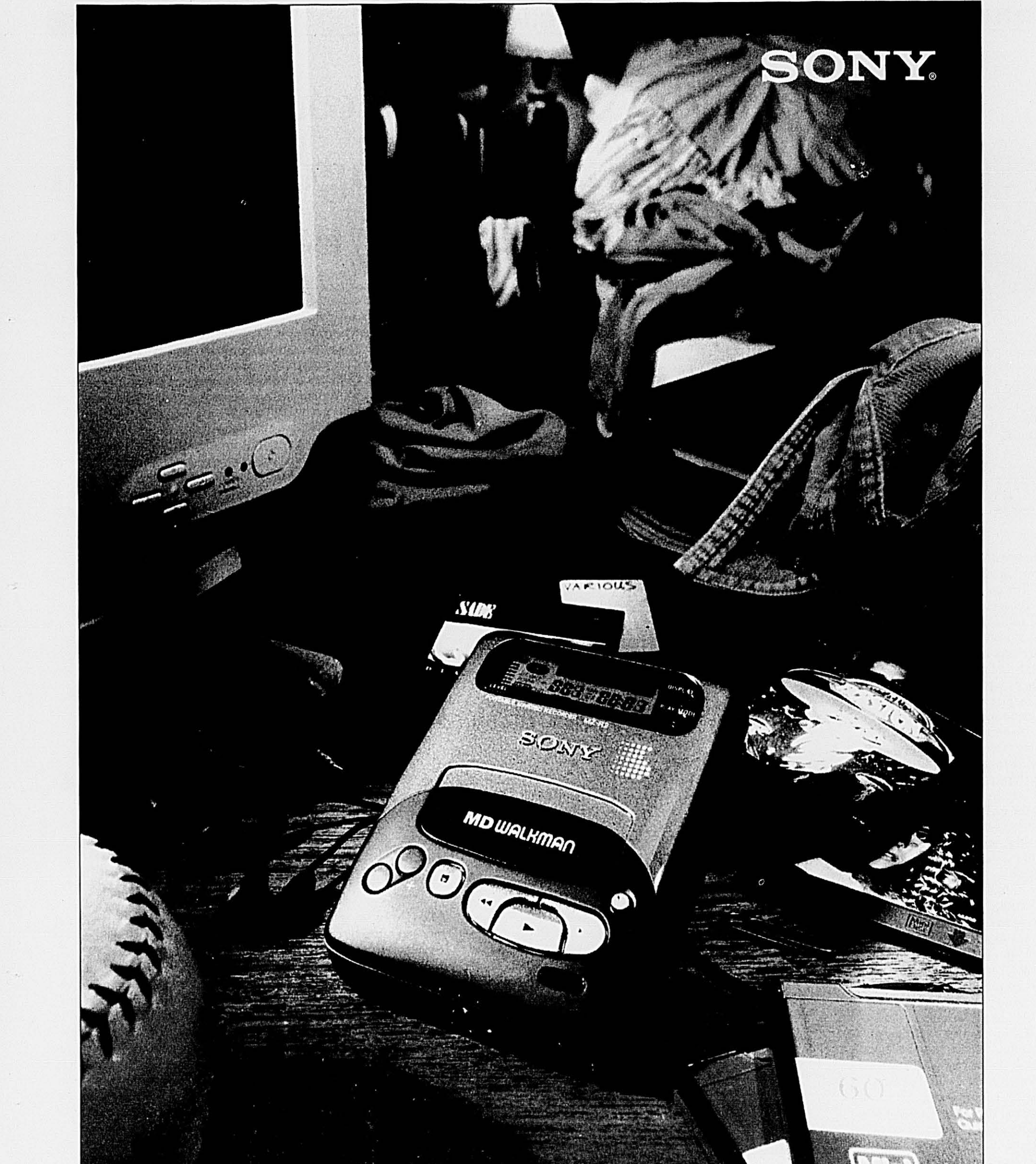
Add to this the fact that less than 20 per cent of the population participated in the August elections. The *Caribbean and Central American Report* has also held General Rios Montt, the newly elected congressional President, responsible "for the deaths of as many as 15,000 civilians in ruthless counter-insurgency operations during the 1980's. François's reluctance to be overly positive is understandable.

Nevertheless, Welsted made a striking comparison between the Guatemalans (who are Mayan) and the native peoples of Canada. Perhaps because they are the majority of the population, the Maya people are fiercely nationalistic.

Rather than wish to form their own, autonomous nation, they are seeking their independence by the reclaiming of their own country. Thus, while their struggles are far from over, it is clear that the people of Guatemala are determined to succeed, and this in itself is a valid reason for hope.

by Dominique  
Nouvet





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# Canadian foreign policy faces a changing world

BY ANUP GREWAL

The federal government has realised that the world is changing in fundamental ways and our foreign policy needs to be dusted off, reviewed and renewed.

Canadians may wonder exactly what Canada's foreign policy is (do we even have one?). Dr. John English, Liberal MP for Kitchener, Ontario and Parliamentary Secretary to both the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and the President of the Privy Council, attempted to clarify some of the ambiguity in a talk entitled, "Whither Canadian Foreign Policy".

English spoke to members of The Canadian Institute of International Affairs at the Mount Stephen Club, about his role in the Parliamentary Committee on Canadian Foreign Policy Review. The group has just completed a supposedly thorough series of deliberations on the topic throughout the summer months.

The review is part of a Liberal campaign promise to reform the defense and foreign policies of Canada. According to English, the reality of the ever increasing influence of the USA on Canada, along with other factors, makes it necessary for Canada to define its views on the world.

English described the process of the Review as a culmination of "round table" discussions throughout Canada in which "any Canadian" could participate. The major issues discussed were Security, International trade, International development assistance, culture and education, sustainable development and Canada's regional priorities.

Much of the speech was off the record as the report is still in the process of being formulated and will not be available until October 28th. Therefore, much of the information given at the talk cannot be included in this article.

According to Dr. English, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) of Canada had the loudest voice at the debates. Business and labour representatives were also present. The NGOs were largely critical of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Canada's aid office saying they would like more independence from CIDA.

Responding to someone who questioned the future of CIDA as an effective force, English said, "CIDA will not disappear," but a new relationship between it and the NGOs needs to be found. English also acknowledged a linkage between the environmental and human rights concerns of various NGOs

and foreign policy issues.

"In terms of human rights and aid, we think it needs to be taken into consideration... If we have a state which attacks fundamental human rights, we don't want to have a state to state bilateral program [with that state]," said English. English cited Canada's relationship with Haiti as an example of such a state. He said he believes that NGOs will be a vehicle for foreign aid in controversial regions.

Aside from the role of the NGOs, English said that Canada's renewed foreign policy will be shaped by fiscal restraints. He pointed out that this is a phenomenon which is occurring in many aid-giving nations who are low on funds, including the USA.

With this in mind, English said that he sees a shift from peacekeeping to peacebuilding as "peacekeeping is a very expensive procedure."

Regarding the fact that today's Peacekeepers are entering areas where battles are still being waged, English noted, "I am not sure the Canadian public wants us to stay... in

those kinds of situations."

English said Canada needs to take advantage of its specialised skills such as promoting technological advances in areas of the world which require them. Therefore, Canadian foreign aid is changing, but the tradition of responsibility in the world remains.

At the moment, the report deals with many crucial issues. It remains to be seen how Canada adapts itself to the "changing world" described by English as arising from the fall of communism and the increase in fiscal constraints around the globe.

How long will this renewal be relevant though? English predicted that 10 years would be a realistic interval before the next round of foreign policy review.

Other questions which the report will discuss include the dilemma of Canada's regional priorities. English said that the question of whether Canada will focus its attention on areas where the need is the greatest or where Canadian business interests are best served is still open.



Dr. John English

DAILY PHOTO BY AARON UNDERWOOD-CHASE

## From Montréal to Haiti *La Maison d'Haiti reacts to events in Haiti*

BY ANNA MARTINEZ

Many Haitian Montrealers are hopeful that the recent accord in Haiti will lead to the development of a democratic state for the country, and with it, freedom for their families.

According to Margorie Villefrance, Program Director of the Maison d'Haiti, the accord passed in Haiti has brought about a mix of emotions in the Haitian community in Montreal. First one of shock, then one of hope.

"I think our first reaction was one of shock because the accord didn't mention any of the names of the generals asked to leave, nor was it signed by a known political figure," she said. But after reading the accord over, Villefrance acknowledged that "the accord is at least good enough to get the needed help from foreign countries into Haiti, to disarm the Haitian army, and start up the new democratic state."

Villefrance disagreed, however, with the amnesty given to criminal prisoners. "Am-

nesty should not be given to those who have committed crimes. Those who have been imprisoned for political reasons should be granted amnesty but not the criminals," she said.

In terms of what the hopes are for the future of Haiti, Villefrance says that she hopes "everything will go as it is going now. That the American army will be able to disarm the militia and install police to ensure that the accord will be followed." In light of the tradition of a repressed Haitian army, it is hoped that the foreign countries who come in to help will encourage their officers to stay and oversee the upcoming elections, as well as to ensure the peace afterwards.

Villefrance believes that President Aristide can now come into the country and, with help from foreign countries, maintain and pursue the hopes and dreams of the Haitian people.

The U.S.'s involvement in Haiti has acquired some criticism due to their "double words," as Villefrance puts it.

"The American policy has not been very clear. For three years the U.S. has made

'threats' that were not listened to because other meanings were taken from them, and therefore not followed through." But as the Program Director of La Maison d'Haiti says, "That's just politics."

Haitian communities in Montréal and in other cities feel that their role in the Haitian conflict, as well as its recent progress, has been to keep the problems that have been plaguing Haiti for the past three years in the press and on the agenda of as many organizations and governments as possible. By doing so, the communities were helping their families and friends the only way they could—by making sure Haiti wasn't forgotten nor ignored.

"We were sad with the accord, but we can't be [too] sad because the people are happy. They saw something positive, and we here can't say it is bad. We have to work very hard now to make things happen. What has happened is not a gift, it wasn't free, it was an indication from the population, and now they see something positive from what has come out of it," stressed Villefrance.

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## Racial harassment policy

continued from page 1

dissatisfaction, completely settled before embarking on a new course of policy making.

"We don't even have the revisions (for the sexual harassment policy) nailed down yet, so it wouldn't make sense to create a new policy," said Small.

"Though it does make sense to continue the investigation and lay the groundwork," she hastened to add.

But Katedza remains unimpressed. "We all know that James McGill was a slave owner, and that

the University was founded on land that was tilled by people who were brought here and lived here under unfavourable conditions. That ghost exists today," she insisted.

So when will McGill have a racial harassment policy in place? "Realistically, I don't think it will be in place by the end of the year," Small said. "The University takes its time when it deals with new issues. The downside of this is that we get frustrated waiting, but the positive side is that you come out with something that everyone can agree with and live with."



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